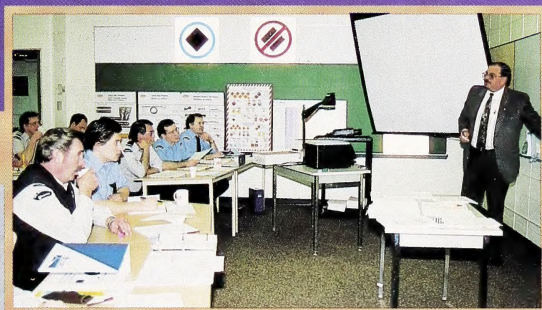


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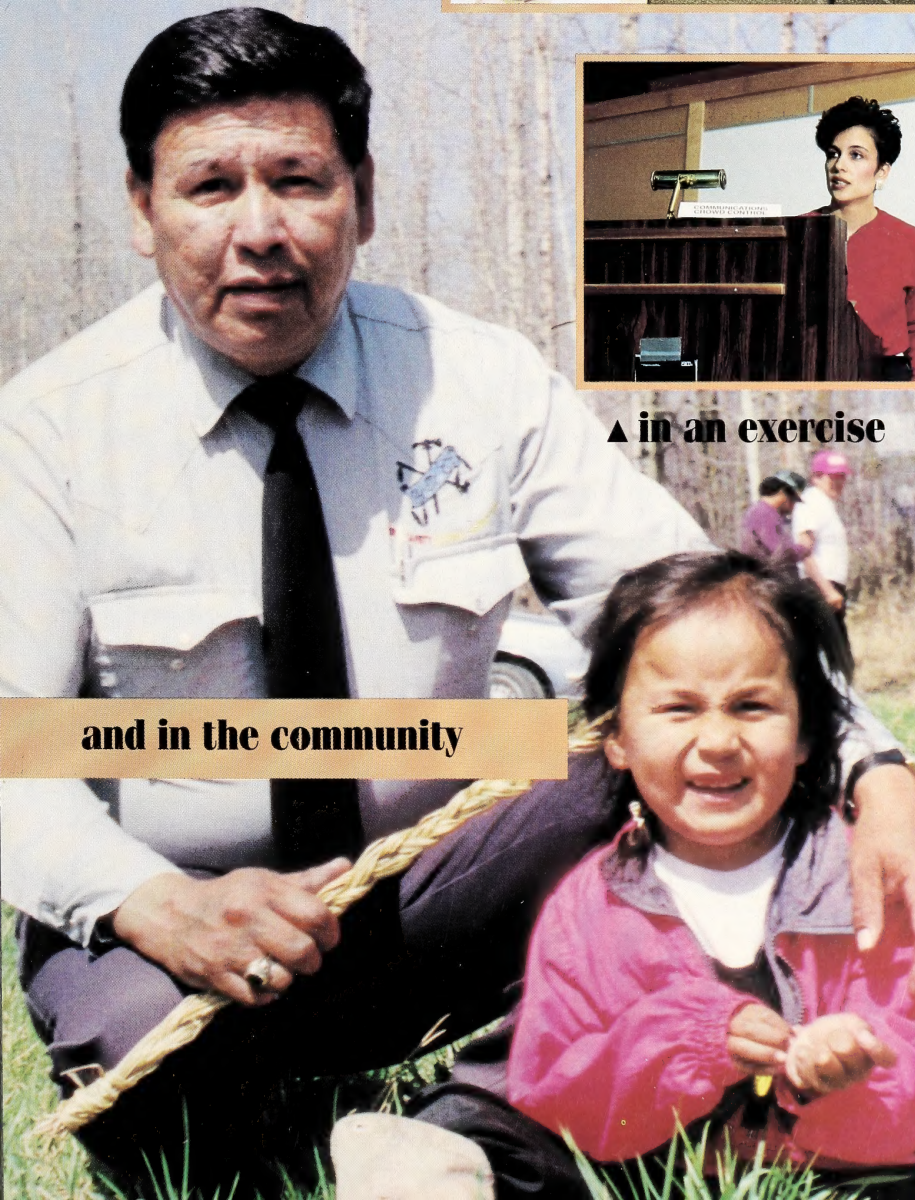
In this issue...

Training today,
in the classroom ►



▲ in an exercise

and in the community



AGENCY

INSIGHT

Changes are sweeping through training

The 1990s are proving to be a remarkable era in education. Teachers and students alike are re-examining everything from school budgets to ideal class size, and even debating philosophical shifts in their roles and responsibilities towards each other. It's a time for reconstructing the educational system as we've come to know it, and yet even in the midst of all the upheaval, more and more people are heading back to class.

In 1993, the door to the classroom is the door to the future, and it has become clear that passing through this door just once, in one's childhood, is not enough. A high school diploma is not enough. Even a university degree is not enough. Nothing static is satisfactory: today's challenges demand a revolving door approach to education. We're all going in and out of class, and heading back again for regu-

lar updates, because knowledge is racing ahead of us, as are the professional demands and personal crises we all face.

This month, *Insight* reviews the current status of safety training, and finds change and flux everywhere. Elected officials, public administrators, emergency planners, rescuers...everyone involved in the practice and profession of safety is a candidate for safety training. Nobody can ignore the call of the classroom, neither experts with dozens of years of experience to their credit, nor elected officials handling safety issues for the first time in their careers.

Most of the articles in this issue have been contributed by Alberta Public Safety Services' training experts: the team of trainers at our Training School, through whose (revolving)

doors thousands of you have passed in the last year alone. The team is led by our Director of Training, Judith Hughes, whose articles on pages 4 through 7 will help you gain an understanding of the changes taking place in the safety training field.

Finally, a note to Albertans in business: I urge you to clip out the *Viewpoint* story on page 13 and pass it around your organization. The article contains some advice by a young business student who has some ideas that will surely save you money, or maybe even save your shirt. Ultimately, the choice of safe or sorry is yours.

Choose well!

Bonnie Shulman

Insight is published quarterly by Alberta Public Safety Services (APSS). The publication aims to inform readers about current developments concerning topics which relate to the mandate of APSS: to prepare for, respond to and follow up on man-made or natural disasters in Alberta. This mandate includes activities in the areas of disaster services and management, as well as the handling, offering and transporting of dangerous goods.

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In This Issue...

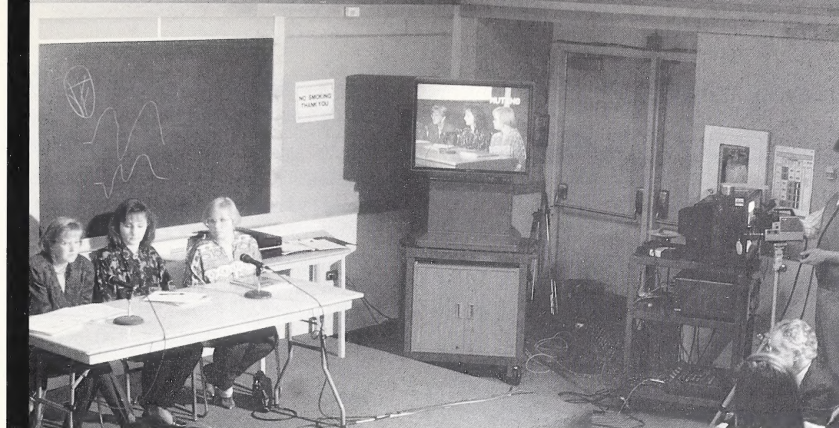
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On the cover (from top): Dr. Uwe Terner teaching at the APSS Training School; Carolyn Shultz from Dow Chemical Canada takes the microphone at a simulated press conference; Daniel Kootenay of the Yellowhead Tribal Council and his grandson pose with a branch of sweetgrass (Native communities in Alberta begin each course with a "sweetgrass ceremony" honouring harmony with nature and the union of mind, body and soul.)

Subscribers: please note that *Insight* is now published three times per year instead of four. We have reduced the number of issues and somewhat altered the format of the magazine in order to lower the overall operating costs of Alberta Public Safety Services.

Alberta
PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES

JUL 27 1993



This might seem like a training course for future ministers, but what these Dow employees are really learning is how to take questions from the media during an emergency (see story on page 12).

Training for a new generation

Insight spoke with the Hon. Peter Trynchy, Minister, Alberta Public Safety Services, about his thoughts on emergency training.

Q How would you summarize the theme of this edition of *Insight*?

A Preparation is the key to efficient emergency response. This means that proper training is essential. If we are to minimize the effects of any man-made or natural disaster, people must have the skills and knowledge to respond to it.

Q Who does APSS train?

A We train those Albertans who will be the main participants in emergency response. This includes provincial and municipal employees, emergency responders, health and social services professionals, volunteer groups, educators, and in some cases, representatives of industry.

Q How many people does APSS train?

A APSS trains about 6000 per year. Last year, when I met with all the municipalities in Alberta, they told me that they felt more training was needed in their own communities. So this year, we increased registrations in Training School courses by about 49 per cent, without any increase in costs, and brought our courses right out to the communities.

Q Do participants have to pay for courses they attend at the APSS Training School?

A We share the costs with the sponsoring organization, since we both recognize we have an equal stake in ensuring that key people have essential skills and knowledge. For

example, municipalities send students to our courses during regular work days, and we contribute towards additional travel costs. We recently changed our rules to ensure that candidates who had to travel some distance to attend courses were not disadvantaged. Students from industry and from out of province pay a course fee as well as all travel costs.

Q Is the APSS course curriculum ever updated?

A Yes, it is continually being updated and changed. This year we have at least six new courses, including a course on ice rescue, workshops on emergency preparedness for schools, and emergency planning for mayors and reeves. We have also introduced new courses on exercise design and dangerous goods incident response. Another unique series of courses is specifically designed for First Nations and Metis settlements. As you can gather, we now offer quite an extensive program.

Q The Fire Training School, located in Vermilion, Alberta, specializes in training firefighters. Does its curriculum duplicate the one offered by APSS?

A No. Students from the fire service represent only a small fraction of our total training clientele. However, there is very close coordination between the APSS Training School and the Fire Training School, involving a regular review of curriculum and an exchange of lecturers. For example, because we have the science experts, APSS recently redesigned a three-month Second Responders' course in conjunction with the Fire Training School to make this course more easily adapted to home study (see page 12). It only makes sense for

us to share our science expertise with Alberta Fire Training School to make this course possible. We also work very closely with other institutions, particularly NAIT, SAIT and the Canadian Emergency Preparedness College to ensure that the various courses offered are complementary and do not overlap.

Q Does the training process for emergency preparedness incorporate new educational technologies?

A Yes, investigations are now taking place into alternative forms of delivery. For example, considerable progress has been made in cooperation with other training institutions to develop interactive video disk programs.

Q Will these enhancements cost taxpayers?

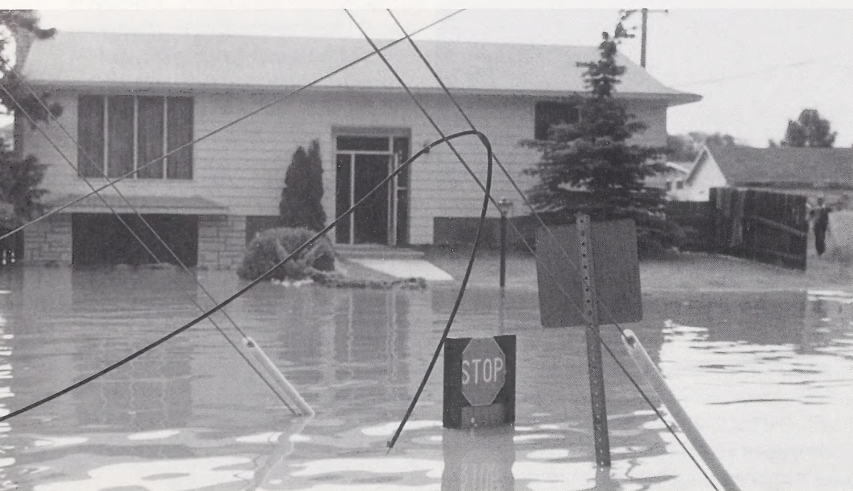
A We have not requested any additional money for training. In fact, we have reduced costs considerably and still provide more and better training. Studies show that emergency preparedness training is cost efficient in the medium and long-term. Where our training courses are economically viable, we hand them over to a commercial training institution.

Q What does the future hold for the APSS Training School?

A Additional changes are on the horizon. We have developed a new system for getting feedback from our training clients. Training Division staff update existing courses so that they meet the constantly changing needs of Alberta communities. New courses will undoubtedly be introduced in response to requests from our clients, and more courses will be delivered in communities throughout Alberta using innovative new delivery methods.

Emergency Preparedness Training at APSS: Promoting a Safety Culture

Judith Hughes
Director of Training



■ *While nobody can STOP floods...*

Shifting philosophies

Change is in the air. There is a growing sense that the public expectations of government and voluntary emergency response organizations are challenging the notion of paternalistic protection in favour of a more self-reliant personal empowerment approach.

Research shows that neither government nor volunteer emergency response organizations can be everywhere at once, helping all who need assistance when disaster strikes, especially when the disaster is of drastic proportions.

The debate can be summed up this way: should government and emergency response agencies assume that the public is naive in safety matters, and therefore assume full responsibility in this area – or instead, should responders help the public gain some control over its own safety?

Paternalism vs empowerment

By definition, paternalism describes a relationship in terms that suggest a parent-child exchange. This implies that the person in charge gives the orders, while everyone else is expected to obey for their own good. In order for such an arrangement to work, it is

essential that both sides accept their roles and agree that this is the way to get the job done. It can be argued that for the purposes of public safety, a paternalistic approach is the appropriate one between government and emergency response agencies on the one hand and the general population on the other. According to this argument, the serious nature of public safety warrants that control remain in the hands of experts.

Empowerment, on the other hand, is a situation in which individuals, and by extension, communities, become active participants in their own safety. This approach encourages a *safety culture* in communities – a whole new way of looking at safety. In an empowered setting, safety becomes an integral aspect of a community's life and personality and an essential part of its character.

The paternalism vs. empowerment debate applies to both natural and man-made disasters. A shift from paternalism to public empowerment brings with it a host of other philosophical shifts as well, such as a tendency for communities to become more proactive in regards to anticipating emergencies. This would take shape as a greater emphasis on planning and preparedness than on reaction and response. Another potential shift might involve sharing information based on an

increased adherence to the belief that the public *has a right to know*.

If public safety is to become a community activity rather than a program applied to it, then a philosophical leap must be made by governments, response agencies, communities and individuals. Municipal governments and response agencies need to acknowledge the growth of safety cultures within communities. Individuals, in turn, need to shed all remnants of powerlessness or passivity.

There is very strong evidence that this philosophical shift is taking place around the world. In this, the United Nations' International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, the objectives include the promotion of innovative, inter-agency and international approaches to disaster reduction. The report of the *Operation Urban Wildfire* task force, written in 1992 following the wildfires which devastated wooded areas around Oakland, California, stressed community involvement and a multi-disciplinary approach to the wildfire threat in areas where woodland meets and intermingles with urban development.

Training initiatives

Government and response agencies need to help communities take charge of their safety; communities and individuals need to throw off passive attitudes to safety and learn how to take control in a crisis.

How can communities empower themselves? Here are some initiatives for the training community to reflect on as the philosophical shift evolves:

- government enhancing its role as liaison between the public and industry and between response agencies and communities
- community leaders making public safety a priority
- school systems incorporating public safety in the curriculum
- municipal officials concentrating on ways to avoid emergencies, in such areas as zoning and land use planning
- insurance companies participating with government, industry and community groups to encourage safe practices
- government maintaining data which can help communities make better safety-oriented decisions
- improving communication between levels of government
- promoting family protection programs

■ targeting safety initiatives to high-risk groups such as seniors and the physically challenged

■ conducting research into the social and economic repercussions of enhanced safety orientation

The Alberta Public Safety Services (APSS) Training School has a role to play within the context of the shifting philosophy. At the community level, we can develop training initiatives to promote safety cultures, by ensuring that there is no ambiguity regarding roles in emergency preparedness and response. Following the 1991 publication of *Emergency Preparedness Guidelines for Schools* prepared by APSS' Plans and Operations Branch and Alberta Education, the APSS Training Division conducted seminars and workshops for school officials in order to raise awareness of emergency preparedness in schools. To date, over 250 individuals have attended these one-day seminars, at which they gathered ideas on how to examine the emergency preparedness of their schools and communities.

Community empowerment requires that APSS work directly with communities so that we can address their specific concerns. Our experience conducting *Emergency Planning* courses in a variety of communities has shown us that in this way we can reach more of the people who should be involved rather than just those who can attend the courses we deliver at our Training School in Edmonton.

By "taking our show on the road", we have significantly increased the number and widened the spectrum of people who are trained and prepared to respond to local emergencies. On-site training has also allowed us to tailor courses to meet the very specific needs of First Nations communities and Metis settle-

ments. More on-site courses are planned for this year.

A commitment from the top administrative levels is essential for the establishment of a safety culture in any community. Mayors, reeves and elected officials who do not attend the three-day practical course on Emergency Planning would definitely benefit from a one-day awareness seminar, such as the one held in December 1992, six weeks after municipal elections were held across the province. Additional one-day sessions are now being planned. A one-day workshop is currently being prepared for First Nations Chiefs and Band Council members.

Government's role

It is essential that all the initiatives offered to communities by provincial agencies are coordinated to avoid duplication and other overlaps. We have made vast improvements in this regard. APSS and the Alberta Fire Training School have worked together on a number of projects for course development and delivery. We share instructor expertise, training materials and educational ideas. For some time now, APSS has participated in course delivery for the University of Alberta's Occupational Health and Safety Certificate program.

Time was when the Dangerous Goods Second Responder course required students to study at the APSS Training School in Edmonton for two and a half months at a time. As a result, only members of Edmonton's fire department could take advantage of this training. But the course has now been revised in consultation with the Alberta Fire Training School and the Edmonton and Calgary Fire Training Schools, into a combination of class work and home study. (See story by Ron Kuban on page 12). The change in

format has lead to a tripling of the number of candidates enrolled in the course and has removed the requirement for candidates to spend significant study time away from home communities. Greater public safety in incidents involving dangerous goods will be the ultimate result of this expanded training.

Conclusion

Bringing courses to communities, adapting courses to specific local needs, ensuring that training institutions coordinate their activities, developing courses in response to community requirements, addressing resource and time constraints of community response personnel, maintaining vigilance about emerging issues in the area of safety: all these initiatives will help us and other government departments to assume a proactive stance in promoting safety. For more information on changes in emergency training, you might like to review the following material (available through the APSS Library, (403) 451-7178).

■ Advisory Committee on the International Decade for Natural Hazard Reduction, 1987. **Confronting natural disasters: an international decade for natural hazard reduction.** National Academy Press, Washington, D.C. HV 553 .C661

■ Advisory Committee on the International Decade for Natural Hazard Reduction, 1989. **Reducing disasters' toll: the United States decade for natural disaster reduction.** National Academy Press, Washington, D.C. HV 593 .R42 1989

■ Alberta Education and Alberta Public Safety Services, 1991. **Emergency preparedness: guidelines for Alberta schools.** Edmonton, AB. LC 216 .F43

TRAINING DIVISION

■ Mission Statement

Training Division is committed to excellence in training and educating selected Albertans to prevent, prepare for, respond to and follow up on man-made or natural disasters; to train and educate Albertans about dangerous goods from an awareness, response and enforcement perspective; to foster understanding and cooperation between appropriate elements of the community; and to undertake research into selected aspects of disasters and dangerous goods.



...a community that has been trained in flood management can reduce the devastation.

Aiming for a federal-provincial training strategy

The federal, provincial and territorial governments are developing a joint strategy for emergency preparedness and response training. An implementation planning group with representation from all jurisdictions has been formed to create a plan which will significantly improve nationwide emergency preparedness.

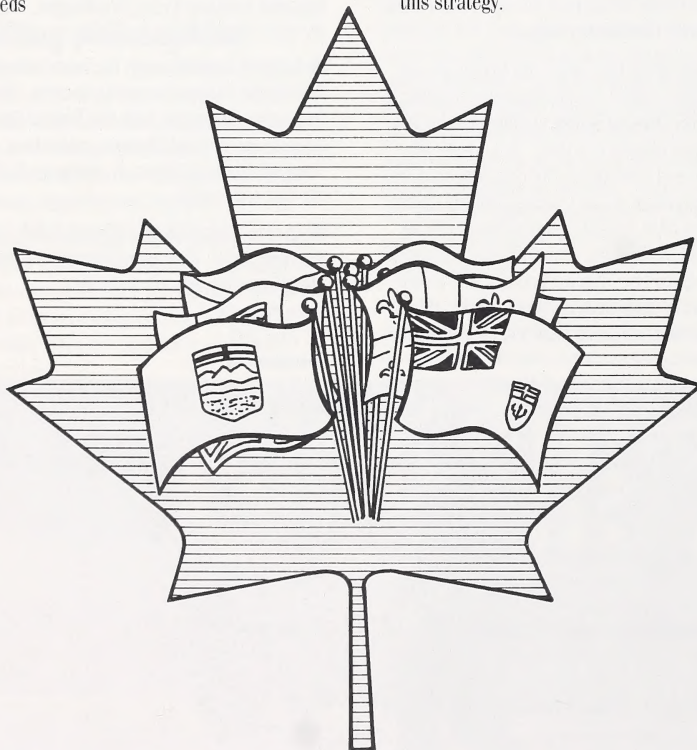
The three main assumptions behind this strategy are:

- i) training is a cost and time efficient means of improving emergency preparedness
- ii) time, effort and money spent on response could be better invested in training
- iii) current training is meeting less than 10 per cent of the need, nationally

The framework of the plan consists of the following:

- all jurisdictions are to identify their training needs

- all jurisdictions are to identify their current training programs, including costs and methods of delivery
- all jurisdictions are to a) specify resources required to meet the strategy and b) explore potential funding arrangements
- a detailed plan is to be drawn up outlining each jurisdiction's full responsibilities
- a process will be developed to set training standards for all jurisdictions
- courses are to be clearly defined in terms of level of training, learning objectives and standards. It is hoped that by the end of June 1993 there will be a plan in existence to ensure the consistency of training across Canada as well as the maintenance of the integrity of provincial training requirements. The sharing of ideas and expertise will be a welcome by-product of this strategy.



Alberta schools taking courses in emergency preparedness

Judith Hughes
Director of Training

- **Schools should take responsibility for emergency preparedness within their facility.**
- **School officials should understand the school's role in the overall community disaster plan.**

This was the thrust of *Emergency Preparedness: Guidelines for Alberta Schools*, a booklet coproduced in 1991 by Alberta Public Safety Services (APSS) and Alberta Education. To reinforce the importance of these guidelines, APSS held several seminars around Alberta in which participants were asked to identify the issues of greatest concern to them. Their most frequent responses were:

In-school shelter versus evacuation:

a clear need was identified for more information. The appropriate forum for this discussion would be a community awareness session to encourage a liaison between the school and the local disaster services agency.

Role clarification:

community and school roles are not always clear. These are local issues, but APSS can assist if requested.

Planning, hazard analysis and mutual aid:

The need is critical, but there seems to be limited time and resources to accomplish this. The participants agreed to keep it simple and use available resources. They also agreed to take a more active role in mutual aid activities between schools, between schools and municipalities, and between municipalities.

School emergency plan:

a number of participants expressed the need for a prototype school plan. APSS agreed to take a coordinating role in its creation.

Are we ready for accreditation?

The Major Industrial Accidents Council of Canada (MIACC) has taken a leading role in the move towards accreditation and certification of first responders. The general consensus is that emergency planning and response training is currently quite fragmented, and that there are no guidelines regarding accreditation. This is both an advantage and a disadvantage.

The advantage is that the process can be approached with a relatively fresh outlook, unencumbered by an existing philosophy of accreditation. Underlying assumptions can be brought to the surface in order to create a sound foundation upon which to build a credible accreditation process.

The disadvantage is that the existing lack of boundaries will make it difficult to find a focus for the eventual discussion on accreditation.

Few people in the emergency response community dispute the need for rationalizing first responder training. The wide range of courses currently offered by a myriad of institutions ought to be gathered under a single program umbrella. The natural next step would be to sanction this action in an accreditation and certification process which would draw on existing structures so as not to create a complicated and costly bureaucracy.

A programmed, accredited approach would:

- provide a greater level of service to the public and enhance public confidence in the qualifications of first responders
- improve inter-agency coordination

- provide consistency of training via application of well-defined standards
- facilitate international response efforts
- provide a framework to identify areas where training is either duplicated or lacking
- facilitate career planning and mobility of responders
- force a scrutiny that will maintain a high level of course quality
- save time and money.

MIACC progress to date

MIACC has determined that it is necessary to find a focus in this area by:

- using National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) guidelines as a basis for standards
- gaining membership on technical committees of the NFPA
- compiling a compendium of courses, programs and materials available in Alberta (MIACC published an *Emergency Response Training Inventory* – November 1992)
- developing a means of describing training courses and programs in a consistent way; this calls for a framework or set of criteria to help trainers clearly describe the kinds of training they provide so as to facilitate



Rescue leaders in training at APSS

itate measuring course equivalency. These criteria can also be used to evaluate training should accreditation become a reality. (MIACC is now piloting *Training Review Criteria for First Responders*)

- taking a stand on accreditation and certification, an idea already endorsed by MIACC stakeholders. A process is now being developed and will be ready for stakeholder approval in November 1993. Two principles that will guide the process: it must not create a huge bureaucracy nor should it be prohibitively costly. These concerns can be met if existing structures are used where possible.

SCBA Cylinder Failure

The United States Department of Transportation reports that a fatality has occurred due to a rupture during refill of an aluminum hoop-wrapped cylinder used for breathing apparatus by a fire department. The cylinder was manufactured in 1977 by Luxfer USA under DOT E-7235-4500 using

aluminum alloy A6351 (cylinders in Canada may be marked CTC/DOT E-7235 pursuant to CTC Special Permit 1116).

Alloy A6351 has been subject in the past to sustained load cracking, usually manifested by cracks in the neck area. Some 75,000 problem cylinders were recalled in 1984 for installation of a steel reinforcing neck-ring, but not all the cylinders were accounted for. The cylinder involved in the fatality apparently did not have the neck-ring and was already past the 15-year limit on the service life of all hoop-wrapped and fully-wrapped cylinders.

While cylinders are still being made under DOT E-7235, a different alloy not susceptible to this cracking has been used since 1985.

The Regulatory Affairs Branch of Transportation Canada asks you to be on the look-out for similar situations, particularly if you do your own refilling. Any user of Luxfer's hoop-wrapped cylinders marked DOT E7235-4500 that are not equipped with a neck-ring are asked to contact the manufacturer.

Make a note...

The Practical Approach to Hazardous Substances Accidents

An International Conference

September 7-10, 1993
Saint John, New Brunswick

Presented by:

Major Industrial Accidents Council of Canada

Environment Canada

Air & Waste Management Association

This three-day program will offer speakers, seminars and panel discussions, along with exhibits from major manufacturers, suppliers and services. The latest, practical technological information, experiences and developments will be presented.

For information on participating or submitting a paper, please contact MIACC to receive an information package.

MIACC

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MIACC



AIR & WASTE MANAGEMENT
ASSOCIATION



Environment
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Canada

Introducing... Designer disasters

Ron Kuban

Manager, Training Research and Development

Training Division



■ Students rumble through the rubble in a disaster exercise at the APSS Rescue Centre.

Emergency preparedness is based on the development of emergency plans and the regular exercise of these plans. This is because a plan on paper comes to life when it is used in a simulated disaster scenario.

Disaster exercises do not have to be complex and expensive, nor must they involve the whole response network. However, they must be well thought out, aimed at a specific need, and involve as many people as possible who might help out in a real emergency.

There is nothing mystical about developing, conducting, and even evaluating disaster exercises. All it takes is a little training. This is why the APSS Training School has developed an entire course on how to design a disaster exercise. This four-day course was developed through a consultant and piloted successfully in May 1993. It will be delivered regularly as part of APSS' regular curriculum.

The purpose of the Exercise Design course is to teach participants how to develop, conduct and assess a variety of disaster exercises.

The course is intended to meet the needs of the people in municipalities and in industry who are responsible for developing or conducting disaster exercises.

For more information about this course, please contact your local APSS District Officer, or the Training School at 422-0346 in Edmonton.

APSS District Offices

Edmonton:	422-1909
Calgary:	297-6440
Camrose:	679-1237
Grande Prairie:	538-5295
Lethbridge:	381-5222
St. Paul:	645-2533
Red Deer:	340-5102

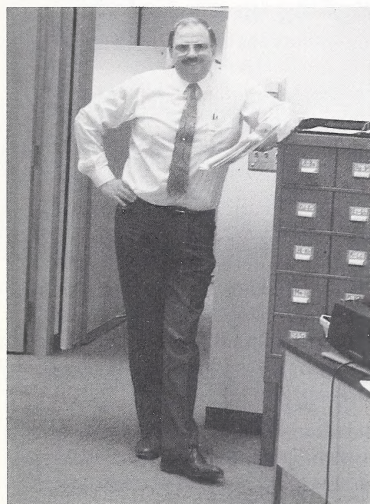
ALBERTA PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES

AGENCY

INSIGHT

Never mind the apples; hold the applause Enthusiasm is an instructor's best reward

Uwe K. Turner, Ph.D.
APSS Training Officer



Uwe Turner...

... keeps second responders
spellbound.

**"I feel extremely
gratified watching
students teaching
one another."**

As the principal instructor in the second responder's course (see page 12), I have a number of unique challenges to meet. Firstly, since there are no formal prerequisites (other than being a firefighter with a keen interest in dangerous goods response), students absorb the material at their own rates, depending on their prior training in this area. I try to pace the course so that no student gets left behind, and so that everyone feels free to ask questions about any relevant topic.

What has surprised me each time I've taught the course is that, during breaks, it is not uncommon for small groups of students to gather in the classroom or the coffee area to discuss class material, rather than events at work or the advantages of one type of firefighting apparatus over

another. As I walk past the groups, I hear snatches of discussions on the differences between ionic and polar covalent bonds in chemicals, the reasons why elements such as chlorine form so many different compounds with oxygen, or the difference in reactivity between ethers and organic acids.

Though I am the instructor, I only get involved when asked in this type of information exchange. I feel extremely gratified watching students teaching one other. It is positive feedback for me to see that the students understand the material to the point that they feel comfortable explaining it to others. For an instructor, it is the ultimate compliment, and provides me with the encouragement to find new ways to maintain a positive and enthusiastic learning environment.



Nightmare on the Athabasca:

disaster à la Stephen King comes to Fort McMurray

Barry Cooper
Training Officer

Introduction

The term Emergency Site Management (ESM) represents the managing of responses to a major emergency with enormous community impact. At Alberta Public Safety Services (APSS), part of our role is to help municipalities learn the ins and outs of the ESM process.

The ESM course, which is a cornerstone of APSS' efforts in this regard, used to be offered only on a limited scale at the Training School in Edmonton. In 1992 we took the ESM show on the road to a group of cities that were prepared to host the course and share the costs of course delivery. Edmonton was the first participant, followed by Calgary.

Fort McMurray, here I come

Months before the course was to take place, I met with John Chrapko, the deputy Director of Disaster Services for Fort McMurray. We studied maps and aerial photographs of the city, and discussed the primary hazards, foremost among which is the town's yearly flood alert, when the whole community bears down and prepares for the worst.

Looking back, I wonder if the exercise was as gruelling for the course participants as designing the exercise was for me! Here's a brief rundown of the marathon preparations it takes to design a disaster exercise on the scale of the one held in Fort McMurray.

Rolling up my sleeves

My first task was to collect a practically endless amount of details about the town's daily routine and piece them together in a realistic set of circumstances to recreate a rapid onset, high water level flood that would strike Fort McMurray with minimal warning and overwhelm the resources of the city.

When the flood scenario was completed and approved by river experts, I went on to identify some 30 possible complications: flooding of historical artifacts, inundation of a senior's residence, people stranded on small pockets of high ground and flooding of storage centres housing emergency equipment.

Then I went to work designing a second upheaval, a road accident involving dangerous goods. To do this, I consulted with the local fire department, emergency services unit, RCMP detachment, the city engineer, local industry, and federal and provincial government environmental specialists.


The grand tour

My next step was to visit Fort McMurray to see the sites, with John Chrapko as my personal tour guide. Criss-crossing the town laden with a map, camera and videocam, I scribbled copious notes about how the disaster would affect landmarks across town. I tried to record the name and address of every building and intersection which might possibly be affected by the rising waters, and I observed all vehicles carrying dangerous goods through town. When I drove back to Edmonton, a flood of sorts had already begun — in my head! I was drowning in details, but the *really* hard work hadn't even begun.

The disaster worsens

I then identified the elevations of various Fort McMurray landmarks in order to create sequential incident reports as the water began to rise throughout the lower townsite.



 Fort McMurray before the deluge.



While touring Fort McMurray, Barry Cooper and John Chrapko took snapshots of the local geography to study later.

On a series of cards, I jotted down incidents that would take place as the water rose. For example, at 247.2 metres the water would reach the window sills of mobile homes in the Clearwater Mobile Home Park. Two metres of water later, a teenager would phone 911 to report a woman abandoned on her roof...you get the picture. This was hardly a picnic for me; in the last 25 years I'd visited Fort McMurray exactly *twice*.

The final step was to develop the hundreds of exercise inputs which would serve as cues to the decisions, directions and actions of the course participants.

Because my goal was to create as large-scale an incident as possible, I worked simultaneously on the dangerous goods scenario that would complement the flood. In my scenario, I covered the highways with black ice to ensure a traffic accident, and called upon Mother Nature to obscure visibility with intense fog so that the accident would cause a pile-up of over 30 vehicles, including two school buses (without students), a loaded charter bus full of night-shift workers and numerous private cars. My APSS colleague Dr. Uwe Turner helped me create a propane disaster in which the major features were a huge fireball and a blast shock zone nearly 4000 metres in diameter.

In my accident scenario, I also listed all the complicating factors which could extend the danger and destruction. Then I listed the expected casualties and had John Chrapko review the inferno.

While I was busy designing hell on earth, John Chrapko was keeping extraordinarily busy himself, lining up the squads of exercise simulators - the people who would act as dispatchers, emergency responders, members of the public and reporters, to name just a handful of the roles involved in a mock disaster. These volunteers were kept entirely in the dark about all exercise details until two days before blast-off.

Conclusion

Although developing an ESM course exercise is a hectic, demanding, gruelling, complex and seemingly endless

process, the results are outstanding. The feedback I received from Calgary testified to the lasting benefits of this system of disaster preparedness. Richard DePatie, Calgary's Coordinator of Disaster Services, recently told me that he had used a portion of the Calgary ESM exercises eight times in one month. "We can keep on using these exercises for years," he told me. "They're ideal tools for preparing our staff for large-scale emergencies."

Now you know what I go through to design a city-wide disaster exercise. If you ever participate in one, you can be sure to endure stress and exhaustion as you struggle against the unrelenting demands of the scenarios. But the experience will be invaluable: you will meet new people and create new operating relationships, and finally, when the storm subsides and you have the time to reflect, you will sigh with satisfaction and renew your commitment to streamlining your procedures and to coping more effectively the next time you're involved in an exercise, or in the kind of disaster that isn't designed months ahead of time on paper.



This hotel will turn into a sort of Noah's Ark at the peak of the flood.

Take a second look at second responder training

Ron Kuban
Manager, Training Research and Development

The Dangerous Goods Second Responders Course, which has been delivered by the Alberta Public Safety Services (APSS) Training School for over five years, was designed for specialists who respond to dangerous goods incidents. The course offers a unique curriculum which combines chemistry, physiology, legislation, and information about response equipment and procedures. APSS was involved in the initial design and development of this course because the scientific expertise required for the chemistry sessions was available here.

Since its inception, one of the course's major drawbacks was its location (Edmonton) and lengthy duration (several months). These factors combined to restrict access to the course: not everyone who wanted to attend could stay away from home and from work for that length of time. The APSS Training Division, aware of the effects of the limitation, and in consultation with other training institutions, analyzed the course to find ways of making it available to firefighters throughout Alberta.

A review committee was established, consisting of representatives from APSS, the Alberta Fire Training School, and the Calgary and Edmonton fire departments. Additional input

This new format makes the course more accessible to firefighters in remote locations, and to communities unable to send their firefighters away to Edmonton for training.

was also gratefully accepted from industry and from the Grande Prairie and Spruce Grove fire departments.

The committee chose to maintain course content as is, having decided that the course meets the requirements of National Fire

Protection Association Standard 471 at the technician level.

What was changed, instead, was the format of the course. The new course format entails only two weeks of classroom study, which is followed up by an extensive home-study package supported by telephone tutorials. This new format makes the course more accessible to firefighters in remote locations, and to communities unable to meet the expenses associated with sending their firefighters away to Edmonton for lengthy training.

The revised course is currently being piloted in Edmonton and Calgary. By all indications, the revision is well appreciated. One indication of this success is that in a recent three-month period, the course was delivered to more students than it had been delivered to over the past three years!

The new second responders' course is further proof of the power for positive change that comes when different agencies work together towards a common goal.

Take-two!

Spokespeople-in-training demand a second chance

Judith Sparkes
Dow Chemical Canada Inc.
Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta

A group of employees from Dow recently participated in a Risk Communications Course at Alberta Public Safety Services to learn the do's and don'ts of media relations. After our first try facing the media in a press conference, some of us hankered for a second chance.

A team was selected to head back to the firing line. What a difference a day made! This time, when grilled by their co-workers and journalism students from Grant MacEwen College, the spokespeople appeared knowledgeable, empathetic and in control. They provided clear, concise, satisfactory answers. Their improvement made us all the more confident in our ability to respond to tough questions in the heat of a press conference.



*TRADEMARK OF THE DOW CHEMICAL COMPANY

VIEWPOINT VIEWPOINT VIEWPOINT VIEWPOINT VIEWPOINT

Business students are taught how to make a business more effective and profitable. But until this year, I hadn't come into contact with any business course that stressed managing risks and losses in order to maximize profits. I think this is a major oversight on the part of business schools.

Management guru Peter Drucker once wrote that the first duty of business is to survive, and that the guiding principle of business economics is not the maximization of profit, but the avoidance of loss. Now that I've completed two safety and loss management courses, I entirely support this point of view.

This year my electives were two engineering courses open to business students as well as future engineers. One was **Safety and Loss Management**. The U of A calendar described the course content as "the theory and practice of providing a safe working environment in all types of major industries...emphasizing the importance of the decisions of engineers and business managers in protecting workers, industry assets and the public in general."



U of A students tour the mining operation of Syncrude Canada

Merinda McCallum is in her final year of a Bachelor of Commerce program at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. Here she describes for *Insight* the perspectives on business and safety she has gained from a unique set of engineering courses open to engineering and business students from all disciplines.

A few dollars and a lot of sense: why business should be more safety conscious

I also registered in the subsequent course, **Risk and Loss Management**.

Both courses were taught by Laird Wilson, P.Eng., Visiting Professor in the Faculty of Engineering and a former loss management executive at Syncrude. He also featured a few guest lecturers from industry and government. The class visited a number of plant sites, including Syncrude, Dow, Petro-Canada, Alta Steel and PCL.

A key component of each course was a project in which we worked in small groups consisting of five students from various engineering disciplines and one business student. Each team researched a past event that produced losses in the areas of production, assets, human resources and the environment. The teams were expected to ascertain all the causes and results of the event, and to draft a set of cost effective and practical recommendations that would prevent a similar incident from ever happening again.

Each team then presented its research to a panel consisting of Professor Wilson, his teaching assistant, and three industry experts. The teams had to brief the panel on the incident and convince them that its recommendations would be a successful and cost effective remedy.

This exercise gave us experience working in multi-disciplinary teams and challenged our ability to convince senior managers about the validity of our recommen-

dations. Most importantly, it opened our eyes to how most devastating incidents could be mitigated and their effects dramatically reduced if effective loss management programs were in place.

The most striking information I gained through the course is in the area of cost versus benefit. The fact is, safety programs need not cost a great deal. Even the smallest companies can afford a safety program; what companies *cannot afford* is to neglect safety and loss management. One accident can cost a company, not to mention taxpayers and insurance companies, many times more than a lifetime of safety programs ever would have. For those companies that cannot afford elaborate safety programs, there are many alternative safety solutions that can be implemented at little or no cost, and which could greatly reduce their risk of loss. No company is immune to risk, but how large the risk is depends on the company's safety and loss management programs.

The operational loss management training I have received will greatly affect the way I do business when I graduate. I've learned that business managers must strike a balance between costs and benefits; this includes making decisions about spending money on safety and loss programs. By being more knowledgeable about these programs and fully aware of the devastating consequences that may result from going without, I will be able to make more informed decisions than I could otherwise have made.

Conclusion

If I were in a position to alter the requirements for a business degree, knowing what I now know, I would insist that all students enroll in at least one operational loss management program during the course of their studies. This would have a significant and positive impact on the future of business in Alberta.

Transportation of dangerous goods: a new course for first responders is on the way

Editor's note: Our rapidly changing technological world has created additional complexities which continually challenge the way in which response agencies react to various incidents. Alberta Public Safety Services (APSS) helps response agencies prepare for the growing challenges of emergency response. Randy Scott, Manager of Training Delivery, explains:



APSS' Transportation of Dangerous Goods (TDG) training agenda is composed of a cross-section of courses designed to meet the specific needs of the wide variety of clients we serve, including all other Alberta government departments.

Our entry-level TDG course is the **Dangerous Goods Identification Seminar**, which forms the basis of the advanced TDG training provided in the new **Dangerous Goods Incident Response (First Responder)** course for the people most likely to be first on the scene of a DG incident.

Dangerous Goods Incident Response draws on APSS' accumulated TDG expertise as well as input from all the course participants. The course takes a systematic and logical approach to first response, with special emphasis placed on responder safety. It begins with a review of the United Nations Classification System and a



demonstration of the use of safety marks and documentation within the risk assessment phase of emergency response. The second part of the course deals specifically with responder safety in terms of, for example, industrial hygiene, toxicity, contamination and decontamination, to heighten responders' awareness. In the third part of the course, the first two components are reviewed for their practical application in response situations.

The course was designed using National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 472 - *Competencies for the First Responders at the Awareness Level* as a guideline. The method of instruction is primarily interactive. Hands-on exercises are the key to the learning experience, and an open-book exam brings the course to an end.

This nine-hour course is delivered by the staff of APSS Training on a regional basis in two evening sessions, or in one and a half days involving the equivalent

of nine hours. The pilot delivery of this course is scheduled for June 1993. It will be offered to Alberta communities following consultation with the regional APSS District Officer, who must submit a request to the Training Division.

It is anticipated that the demand for this type of training will far exceed APSS course delivery capabilities. APSS is therefore attempting to establish an inventory of similar training courses across the province.



Elected Albertans crack the books

Jayne Galanka
APSS Training Officer

During an emergency or a disaster, some services have distinct and recognized roles: fire-fighters fight fires and perform rescues; the police provide evacuation, security and crowd control services; and ambulance personnel attend to the injured.

But where does the municipal administration fit into the emergency picture? What is the role of the mayor or reeve? Are they in charge of the disaster operation? What powers, if any, are extended to the municipality's elected officials, the peoples' representatives? And finally, what are the financial responsibilities of the municipality prior, during and after a disaster?

These questions form the core of a one-day seminar entitled **Municipal Emergency Planning for Mayors, Reeves and Elected Officials**. The seminar provides an overview of potential disaster scenarios and reviews the applicable legislation and other principles governing disaster management. The roles and duties of all elected officials are reviewed at length.

A guest speaker is invited to share first-hand experiences, and two group discussions round out the day's events. This seminar is meant to complement the longer **Emergency Planning for Municipalities** course, which is targeted at municipal Directors of Disaster Services and service heads of municipal agencies and volunteer organizations whose involvement is required during a disaster response.

"I've been on disaster services courses before, and this was one of the best," said Don Purdy, Reeve of the county of Lac Ste. Anne. In an interview with reporter LaVyne Osbak of *Community Voice* newspapers, Purdy went on to say, "[The course] really opened your eyes."

Added Deputy Reeve Ron Kidd, "it was very excellent...it made you see what needs to be in place."

The seminar focuses on emergency plans, procedures, and evacuation manoeuvres. There is some discussion on the need to have a sound

municipal emergency plan in place that covers all contingencies. "The biggest issue is food — how to feed the evacuated people," commented Reeve Purdy.

As a result of his day of training at APSS, Deputy Reeve Kidd emphasizes that "I'll be able to take a more active part and add something to the discussion." And he won't be the only one. Even those who only heard the seminar material second-hand are inspired to get involved in emergency planning.

Since the seminar is intended to serve as a springboard for continued discussion in the community, Reeve Purdy and Deputy Reeve

Kidd shared their material at meetings with their County's Council and administration.

Councillor Glenn Arthur, who attended the Council meeting where the seminar content was reported on, then suggested that the County's plans should be coordinated with the disaster services plans of neighbouring municipalities - Mayerthorpe, Sangudo, Onoway and Alberta Beach. "Rarely would we have [a disaster] in the County that doesn't affect the other municipalities," he noted.

For more information about emergency training for elected officials, please call the APSS Training School at 422-0346.

Monsanto employees geared for safety

Linda Carrier
Communications Consultant

At Monsanto's plant in the Montreal suburb of LaSalle, Quebec, employees have taken safety matters into their own hands. On their own initiative, they run an award winning off-site health and security committee.

The five employees who run the committee are dedicated to promoting health and safety. "Our goal is to create a security program which will sensitize our employees to safety problems, so that we can reduce accidents in the workplace and at home," says committee chairperson Richard Lamarche.

The committee organizes on and off-site activities. At the chemical plant, programs

are delivered on fire prevention, pool and barbecue safety and household security, including the safe storage of dangerous chemicals. These very popular programs are presented about ten times a year. The committee carries out its program with support from community organizations, including the police, fire department and local board of health. The community has demonstrated its appreciation of Monsanto's safety culture: this year the local board of health awarded the committee for its outstanding work in promoting health in the workplace.



Empowered employees. From left to right: Jacques Fauteux, Josée Babin, Christine Yaccarini, Richard Lamarche and Francois Ménard.

Taking the hazard out of schoolwork

Carsten Olesen
Senior Compliance Officer



■ School staff and contractors separate knowns from unknowns.

In the early 80s, Alberta Environmental Protection and Alberta Education jointly sponsored a partial chemical clean-up in schools throughout the province. Several tonnes of chemical materials were collected, treated and disposed of at the University of Alberta incinerator near Edmonton.

In the late 80s, science consultants at Alberta Education noted that there were still many chemicals and hazardous wastes in science

laboratories and classrooms, including poisonous, carcinogenic, corrosive and potentially explosive materials. Several school jurisdictions attempted to have their chemicals removed in a variety of ways: by disposing of them in landfills, in municipal sewer systems, by storing them in school buildings or by hiring companies to dispose of them.

Only later was it discovered that some of these companies operated in non-compliance

with federal, provincial or local legislation. As a result, there were a few incidents in which school hazardous waste was improperly disposed of. Following one of these incidents, a school jurisdiction was fined for transporting chemicals in contravention of provincial Transportation of Dangerous Goods (TDG) regulations.

As the science curriculum in Alberta schools started changing, towards the end of the '80s, teachers, textbook publishers and chemical supply companies became increasingly aware of concerns over hazardous chemicals and the new legislation regulating them. At the same time, there were two important developments in the field:

- new legislation was enacted concerning the purchase, receipt, storage, use and transportation of chemical substances.
- an infrastructure for the transportation and treatment of chemical substances was created.

With the establishment in 1987 of the waste treatment center near Swan Hills and the Alberta Special Waste Management System (ASWMS), a viable method had been put in place for the safe disposal of school chemicals.

The Alberta government departments of Education and Environmental Protection and the Alberta Special Waste Management Corporation recommended that a program be established and funded on a one-time only basis to assist school boards in Alberta to properly manage their chemicals.

With this collection, all school jurisdictions would be in an equitable position regarding managing unwanted chemicals and would assume responsibility for the cost of chemical management in the future.

The first phase of the 1991 School Toxic Round-Up program was to promote awareness. Science consultants and the ASWMC created a manual entitled *Guidelines for the Management of Chemicals and Hazardous Wastes in Schools*. Copies were distributed widely in the Alberta school system. The manual stressed the development of chemical management policies and the training of staff. Teachers, administrators, maintenance work-

ers and school support staff were advised to select people from amongst themselves to be trained in the handling of dangerous chemicals. The nominees attended a four-day training session.

Jurisdictions were then requested to submit inventories of chemical waste needing disposal. Unknowns were unacceptable as they could not be legally transported, stored or disposed of. However, small quantities of some 1000 unidentified chemicals requiring disposal were located throughout the province. APSS helped school personnel identify these unknowns and establish protocols for their disposal. The waste chemicals were then col-

lected, transported to the ASWMS and handled without incident.

The cost of the round-up was reduced where possible. For example, 24 different recyclable chemicals were delivered to labs at the University of Alberta; elemental mercury was consolidated and sent to the University of British Columbia for use in a new telescope. The waste gathered at 110 sites throughout Alberta was consolidated at centralized locations by private sector firms.

The school hazardous wastes were ultimately classified into 26 standard waste profile sheet categories and 29 speciality categories. There

were also 12 potentially explosive items. These were stabilized by the RCMP.

As a result of this program, 121 school jurisdictions throughout the province managed to rid themselves of unwanted chemicals in a safe and legal manner. Over 200 school employees became trained in all aspects of school waste management. Protocols were established for chemicals that are tricky to handle. Finally, the consolidation, bulking and recycling of the waste materials greatly reduced the cost of the round-up project: it came in under budget.

Recent acquisitions in the library:

a selected bibliography of materials available from the Alberta Public Safety Services Library

Compiled by Teresa Richey
APSS Librarian

To borrow the material listed, send an inter-library loan form to Alberta Public Safety Services (AEPS), 10320-146 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5N 3A2. Materials located in our Coordination and Information Centre (CIC), at our Training School, the Government Emergency Operations Centre (GEOC) or our Reference Collection (REF) cannot be borrowed but can be referred to in the Library.

Bair, Frank, et. al. **Hurricane Andrew : storm of the century.** Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. : Dade Book Co., 1992. 99 p.
HV 636 1992 .B34 1992, MAIN LIBRARY

Emergency responder training manual for the hazardous materials technician. By the Center for Labor Education and Research. Edited by Lori P. Andrews. Scarborough, Ont. : Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1992. 505 p.
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Primer on natural hazard management in integrated regional development. Dept. of Regional Development and Environment, and the U.S. Agency for International Development. Washington, D.C. : Organization of American States, 1991. Various paging.
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Risk assessment and risk management for the chemical process industry. Stone and Webster Engineering. Edited by Harris R. Greenberg and Joseph J. Cramer. New York : Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1991. 369 p.
TP 155.5 .R55 1991, MAIN LIBRARY

Safety productivity forum. Proceedings. Waterloo, Ont. : Institute for Risk Research, 1992. 105 p.
T55 .A1 S23 1992, MAIN LIBRARY

"Papers presented at the Safety Productivity Forum held in Toronto on May 12 - 13, 1992" - Intro.

Technical instructions for the safe transport of dangerous goods by air. 1993 - 1994 ed. Montreal : International Civil Aviation Organization, 1992. Various paging.
TL 720.7 .T42 1993, REF

Technical instructions for the safe transport of dangerous goods by air : supplement. 1993 - 1994 ed. Montreal : International Civil Aviation Organization 1992. Various paging.
TL 720.7 .T421 1993, REF

Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992. "Behind the words" : an informal guide to the 1992 Act for inspectors. [Ottawa] : Transport Canada, 1992. Various paging.
KE 3763 .A2 1992, MAIN LIBRARY

Understanding catastrophe. Edited by Janine Bourriau. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1992. 213 p. (The Darwin College Lectures).
GF 85 .U52 1992, MAIN LIBRARY

**Alberta Public Safety Services
Training School**

Extension Course Schedule

1993-1994

Date	Course	Location
July 6-8	Basic Rescue	Onoway
July 6-8	Basic Rescue	Grande Cache
July 12-14	Basic Rescue	Canmore
Sept. 1-2	Basic Rescue	Enoch Band
Sept. 1-2	Basic Rescue	Sturgeon Band
Sept. 8-9	Basic Rescue	Cold Lake Band
Sept. 8-9	Basic Rescue	Fort McKay Band
Sept. 13-16	Emergency Site Mgmt.	Calgary
Sept. 14-16	Basic Rescue	M.D. of Rockyview #44 Hamlet of Langdon
Sept. 21-23	Basic Rescue	I.D. #18 South Hamlet of Goodridge
Sept. 28-30	Basic Rescue	City of Lethbridge
Oct. 13-14	Basic Rescue	Buffalo Lake Metis Settlement
Oct. 13-14	Basic Rescue	Fishing Lake Metis Settlement
Nov. 2-4	Basic Rescue	Village of Longview
Nov. 16-18	Basic Rescue	Paddle Prairie Metis Settlement
Nov. 20	Ice Rescue	Grande Prairie District
Nov. 27	Ice Rescue	St. Paul District
Dec. 7-8	Casualty Simulation	Edmonton
Dec. 11	Ice Rescue	Camrose
Dec. 18	Ice Rescue	Lethbridge District
TBA Jan./Feb.	Emergency Site Mgmt	Red Deer
March 29-30	Casualty Simulation	Edmonton
TBA	DG Incident Response (First Responders)	TBA
TBA	Exercise Design	TBA
TBA	Emergency Planning: Municipalities	TBA
On Request	DG Identification	
TBA	Emergency Preparedness: Schools	TBA
TBA	DG Carriers and Shippers (basic)	TBA
TBA	DG Incident Response Seminar	U of A
TBA	Basic Rescue - First Nations	TBA
TBA	Emergency Planning: Mayors, Reeves and Elected Officials	TBA
TBA	Emergency Planning: Chiefs/Band Council Members	TBA

**Alberta Public Safety Services
Training School**

Central Course Schedule

1993-1994

The following courses will be held at:
The APSS Training School
10420 157 Street, Edmonton
Tel: 422-0346

Date	Course
July 6	Emergency Planning for First Nations
Sept. 14-16	Disaster Social Services
Sept. 23	Emerging Issues Workshop
Oct. 4-7	Emergency Site Management
Oct. 4-7	Emergency Public Information Officers
Oct. 19-20	Dangerous Goods Carriers and Shippers
Oct. 19-21	Disaster Health Planning Seminar
Oct. 25-29	Rescue Leaders
Nov. 23-25	Emergency Planning for First Nations
Dec. 7-9	Emergency Planning for Municipalities
Jan. 31 - Feb. 3	Emergency Site Management
Jan. 31 - Feb. 3	Emergency Public Information Officer
Feb. 7-8	On-Highways Inspector
Feb. 8-10	Disaster Health Planning Seminar
Feb. 22-24	Disaster Social Services for First Nations
March 15-17	Disaster Social Services
March 17	Emerging Issues Workshop
TBA	Exercise Design
TBA	DG Incident Response (First Responders)
TBA	Emergency Planning - Metis Settlements
TBA	Emergency Planning - Mayors, Reeves, Elected Officials

For information on any of these courses, please phone the
APSS District Office nearest you:

Edmonton	422-1909
Calgary	297-6440
Camrose	679-1237
Grande Prairie	538-5295
Lethbridge	381-5222
St. Paul	645-2533
Red Deer	340-5102

Product Profile



Unknowns: School Toxic Round-Up

The disposal of chemicals from school laboratories poses some interesting challenges. Since the inception of the School Toxic Round-Up program, some unique handling and classification methods have been implemented for what we now refer to as:

Unknowns . . .

which are the contents of those dusty bottles found hibernating in the back of classroom cupboards. They were stored there long before the implementation of the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS), the legislation that calls for all hazardous chemical products to be shipped with a **label**, and for employees to have access to **Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)**.

An MSDS provides complete information on how to handle a product safely, and the proper first aid procedures to follow in case of an accident. The label gives an immediate indication of the hazards this product presents to the user.

Unknowns may or may not meet the criteria for classification as dangerous goods. Anyone handling, offering for transport or transporting dangerous goods must be

trained to do so. Training is provided to an employee by the employer, who must sign the certificate issued to the employee in recognition of this training, regardless of who actually provides it. The certificate is valid for three years.

A trained employee is fully aware that all dangerous goods must be shipped with a shipping name and a classification to identify the hazards in handling the product. To ascertain the classification and shipping name for a particular unknown, there are set standard tests outlined in the regulations. To avoid lengthy delays in sampling and analysis, and to have the material moved for safety reasons, these set standards were set aside. A few simple tests and experiments were conducted on site with pH and litmus paper, matches, paper towels and detailed observations with the naked eye.

The **Coordination and Information Centre (CIC)** of Alberta Public Safety Services is staffed around the clock by officers trained to assist lab personnel over the phone. In practice, appointments for this process need to be arranged, since schools usually have a considerable num-

ber of unknowns sitting around that must be identified through various tests.

The tests are fast and simple, and can be conducted once a full description of the product's container has been relayed to the officer, along with all additional details that can possibly be provided. Colour, smell, residue and appearance are all key components of the identification process.

While this process cannot provide an accurate description of the product, it will identify it sufficiently to enable the use of a generic **Not Otherwise Specified** shipping name which must be preceded by the words **treat as**. This manner of labelling and documentation provides emergency response crews with information as to the hazard they are dealing with and how to respond to a spill.

Once the identification process has been completed, the products enter the transportation mode as regular dangerous goods and are subject to all applicable regulations.



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Emergency detectives keep an eye on trends

Judith Hughes
Director of Training

Alberta Public Safety Services (APSS) is on the lookout for ways to enhance our service to Alberta communities. One way we hope to achieve this goal is to watch out for issues and trends developing on the horizon of the emergency preparedness field. Helping Albertans stay ahead of the game is the purpose of our ongoing series of *Emerging Issues* workshops.

Late last year, we held a one-day workshop to share new information about cold-water near drowning and hypothermia. The workshop had another purpose: it helped us complete a needs assessment we had initiated to determine the ability of municipalities, in terms of equipment and trained response personnel, to respond to ice rescue/cold water near-drowning situations. A few months prior to the workshop, we had mailed out questionnaires to waterside communities. From the responses that flooded in, we learned that there was indeed a province-wide need for such training.

At the workshop, we spoke one on one with emergency responders and collected the information we needed to flesh out our needs assessment. We were able to pinpoint exactly which types of training were required, and the resources available in communities to help us

provide it. An **Ice/Cold Water Rescue** course is now part of the APSS training program.

Another Emerging Issues workshop dealt with **Emergency Preparedness in Alberta Schools**. The workshop helped us identify sub-issues where further reflection was needed. Participants suggested ways to improve crisis communications between schools, between parents and faculty, and between schools and the community.

Upcoming workshops

This year's *Emerging Issues* series will focus on how APSS can link up with other groups to enhance emergency preparedness in the province. For example, we are planning to examine the role of Emergency Planning Consultants and Government Emergency Planning Officers.

The role clarification inherent in this topic is consistent with the philosophy of community empowerment, which I have explained in my article on pages 4 and 5.

Staying in tune with the needs of our clients is a key priority for APSS, as is listening to their point of view on issues that affect the way they do business. For those involved in the trans-

portation of dangerous goods, we are considering holding a TDG workshop tentatively entitled **TDG — If I had a Hammer**. Transport Canada is undertaking a major review of the regulations through the regulatory review process, and the internal amendment list. The workshop would be a forum for participants to express their views as to what kinds of changes they see as being appropriate.

The give and take between the private and public sectors is the driving force behind the success of the workshops we've held to date, and one of the reasons they attract large and enthusiastic audiences. We'd be interested in hearing from you: let us know which issues you'd like to see debated in future public forums.

As of September, the Training School will have a classroom on the main floor which can accommodate students with limited mobility.

We are planning to hold a seminar to discuss the emergency preparedness needs of the physically challenged. Details will be included in future editions of *Insight*.